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NOTES AND QUERIES.

STREET CUSTOMS OF BUENOS AIRES. The following account of certain street customs of Buenos Aires, originally appearing in the "Mail and Empire" (Toronto, Canada), is reproduced from the "Evening Post" (Worcester, Mass.) for September 21, 1905:—

"Every large city has certain street sounds that are common to them all, but every city also has certain street sounds that are peculiar to itself and that instantly bring the city to one's mind when heard elsewhere, just as a fleeting perfume often brings back the recollection of some person, long since forgotten, with whom the perfume was associated.

"Buenos Ayres has the reputation of being one of the noisy cities of the world, and there are not only all sounds common to all great cities constantly assailing the ear, but there are several that are distinctly local.

"The one most likely to first attract attention, because it is often heard elsewhere to express contempt or disapprobation, is the sharp emission of air through the teeth, causing a hissing sound.

"One cannot be on the streets of Buenos Ayres five minutes without hearing what to the untrained ear is a distinct hiss, such as we use in the theatre to bring sharply to book those thoughtless people who talk out loud in the midst of the overture, or, more rarely, to express our discontent at a particularly bad piece of acting or singing; and it is only when one has been here for some little time that one's ear differentiates the 's-s-s' made entirely with the tongue and teeth used also by the Argentines in condemnation, from the 'pst-pst' made with the lips, which means primarily—stop!

"Thus, if the driver of a wagon or carriage is mounting to his seat and the horses start before he can take the lines, he emits a sharp "pst," and the horses instantly stop.

"If you are in a street car or cab and wish to stop, or you are on the sidewalk and wish to hail a car or cab, you simply hiss and the car stops, or the cabman instantly looks in your direction and comes to pick you up.

"The most curious use of it, however, is to attract the attention of a friend passing on the opposite side of a street or one who is ahead of you whom you wish to overtake, and the first time that a foreigner is hissed at in this way he feels distinctly insulted, but one soon gets used to it, as every one does it, and accepts it, and you unconsciously find yourself following their example.

"It is really a most penetrating sound, and it instantly arrests the attention, no matter what other noises may be going on about one, and it is especially efficient in a crowded open-air café, where the noises of the street are combined with the talking and laughing, as it never fails to bring an acknowledgment from your waiter that he has heard you, no matter how much he may be absorbed in serving or in talking.

"Another sound that any one who has visited Buenos Ayres will recall is the rather weird musical note that all the horsecar drivers blow on approach-

ing an intersecting street to prevent a collision, an ordinary cow's horn without ornamentation of any kind being used to produce this sound, four distinct notes in an ascending scale being blown ; and the sound is certainly distinctive.

"We are all of us used to the musical notes of the coach horn, and know how every one stops to watch the jolly party go by, so that when one hears on the street here for the first time a sound something like it, but without any gayety in the notes, each one being held much longer and pitched in a high, mournful key, one's interest is instantly aroused as to what may be coming.

"All one sees at first is a man on a bicycle riding as hard as he can, blowing a bugle about two feet long, with twice as many keys as the bugles at home.

"From the way the carriages scatter, however, he is evidently clearing the way for something, and up the street, a block or so away, one sees the fire-engines coming tearing along, the bicycle man keeping well ahead with his melancholy long sustained note of warning, plainly distinguishable long after he has passed.

"No one who visited the World's Fair in Chicago will forget the sad-eyed Oriental who sat outside the gates of the various side shows on the Midway and blew all day long on a reed pipe monotonous changes on about five different notes.

"Its very monotony impressed it indelibly on the mind, and to hear it instantly recalls snake charmers and the Kutchee Kutchee dance ; but the same notes here are used by the itinerant glazier, who, with a high wooden frame strapped to his back containing panes of glass of various sizes, is endeavoring to attract the attention of the woman in the third story of the house across the street, who has a broken window.

"It is somewhat startling in the middle of an avenue crowded with carriages suddenly to hear a steam whistle, and one often has to hunt for nearly a minute to see whence the sound comes, if the carriages are densely packed, and then be guided by a thin line of ascending smoke, and to the astonished gaze is disclosed a perfect but diminutive model of a locomotive, about five feet long, mounted on a push-cart, the locomotive being duly equipped with a real steam whistle, the blowing of which at intervals has attracted attention.

"It is the chestnut vender who thus advertises his wares, and who opens the firebox to give you roasted chestnuts, or the boiler of the locomotive if you prefer them boiled.

"Should you hear the music of a triangle on the streets of Buenos Ayres, and see a man carrying a red cylinder on his back, looking like a water cooler or the chemical fire extinguishers used in the United States, and followed by a crowd of small boys, don't assume that this is the Argentine fireman on his way to a fire, but watch him for a minute, and you will see one of the small boys pluck his sleeve, at which he will stop, unsling the red cylinder from his back, and set it on the ground, being instantly encircled by the crowd.

"The top of the cylinder is divided off into spaces which are numbered from one to ten, and in the centre is a pointer that can be rapidly revolved on a fixed centre like a roulette wheel.

"The boy who has stopped the vender pays his penny with the air of a Cræsus, and, with a breathless audience gives the pointer a twist, and when it stops the vender opens the cylinder and hands to the small boy as many packages of sweets as the number calls for.

"There are no blanks, as the sporting spirit of the small boy is not sufficiently developed to play for all or nothing, but there is no doubt that it tends to cultivate that national vice in Argentina, gambling, which is indulged in by all classes, rich and poor alike, from horseracing to the national lottery, tickets being sold on the streets for the weekly drawing of from \$80,000 to \$1,000,000 at prices within reach of even the poorest classes."

"Sometimes you will hear what seems to be the notes of a bird. If, however, you investigate, you will find that it is not a bird at all, but the scissors grinder, who by moving and bending at different angles a flat piece of steel about three feet long against his rapidly revolving emery wheel, was producing these birdlike notes, well understood by every Buenos Ayres housewife and only bewildering to the stranger within the gates."

SLANG TERMS FOR MONEY. The following article is an editorial in the "Boston Herald" (Evening Edition) for February 18, 1905:—

"At a dinner given at a New York hotel last week and attended by fifteen prominent police captains of the metropolis a guest counted ten different words used by these captains in place of 'money.' The words were these: tin, cush, gelt, rocks, candy, dough, sugar, mazuma, glad wealth, welcome green. Gelter, not gelt, was used by the rogues of New York in the fifties; not one of the other words appears in the curious slang dictionary compiled by George W. Matsall, special justice, chief of police, etc., and published in New York in 1859. Welcome green is a variant of long green. What, pray, is the origin of mazuma? Is it not an importation of our German brethren? The word 'mesumme' is in German slang, and 'linke mesumme' means counterfeit money. Singular to relate, the police captains did not use the word 'graft.' Perhaps they have grown sensitive of late. The reader will notice the absence of simoleons, bones, cold bones, and plunks, terms applied correctly to a certain number of dollars, as in the sentence: 'It cost me two cold bones;' yet simoleons is a word used at times to denote a certain fixed sum.

"Think for a moment of the slang synonyms of money. Here are a few of them: The actual, ballast, beans, blunt (for specie), brads, brass, bustle, charms, checks, coal, colliander seeds, coppers, corn (in Egypt), chink, crap, chinkers, chips, corks, dibs, darby, dots, ducats, dimmock, dinarey, dirt, dooteroomus, dumps, dust, dyestuffs, dollars, gingerbread, gilt, gent (for silver), haddock, hard stuff (or hard) horse, nails, huckster, John, John Davis loafer, lour (said to be the oldest cant term for money), kelter, lurrries, mopusses, moss, muck, needful, oil of palms, peck, plums, nobbings (collected in a hat by street performers), ocre, oof, pewter, pieces, posh, queen's